

TECHNICAL APPENDIX C

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM FOR BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES – TAPIA STATE PARK AND ZUMA BEACH



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Memo

To: Mr. Derek Ross, Environmental Planner, Parsons Brinckerhoff
From: Mr. Chris Blandford, Staff Biologist, Chambers Group, Inc.
Date: April 6, 2002
Re: Biological Reconnaissance Surveys for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Shuttle Bus Project

On March 11, Chambers Group conducted a reconnaissance-level biological resource survey at two proposed shuttle bus stop locations, Tapia Park and Zuma Beach. The Tapia Park Shuttle Stop is in Tapia County Park in the Monte Nido area of the Santa Monica Mountains, near an existing picnic area off of Dorothy Drive. The Zuma Beach Shuttle Bus Stop is in Zuma Beach County Park adjacent to a park restroom facility on Westward Beach Road.

Prior to the survey, searches of the most current versions of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and the California Native Plant Society Electronic Inventory (CNPSI) were conducted. These databases contain records of federal- or state-listed or proposed endangered or threatened species, federal and state of California species of concern, or otherwise sensitive species or habitats reported on or in close proximity to the site.

No special-status plant or wildlife species were observed or detected at either site during the survey and no habitat for sensitive species currently exists at either location. Therefore, construction of the either site is not likely to adversely affect any sensitive plant or wildlife species. Descriptions of the general project designs, existing biological resources, and recommendations for each site are stated below.

Tapia Park

The proposed project would include a shuttle bus stop, or turnout, located adjacent to a Dorothy Road. The turnout would consist of the placement of decomposed granite on top of graded native soil.

The proposed site is located within a previously disturbed area within a coast live oak woodland. The existing understory consists of ruderal grass species dominated by wild oats (*Avena barbata*). The surrounding areas support a variety of undisturbed habitats that include coastal sage scrub, maritime

chaparral, and valley oak woodlands. Several small mammal burrows, likely belonging to California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), were evident along the road shoulder and in adjacent fields to the south.

It is recommended that construction activities should be contained within existing disturbed or paved areas. The turnout should be constructed outside of the dripline of all existing coast live oaks. General nesting bird surveys are recommended within 500 feet of the proposed construction. These surveys should be performed by a qualified biologist within 2 weeks prior to the onset of construction. Given these recommendations, construction of the site is not likely to adversely affect any sensitive plant or wildlife species.

Zuma State Beach

The proposed project includes the construction of a shuttle bus stop between the existing parking stalls on Westward Beach Road and the restroom facility. A wetland and dune habitat restoration area associated with Zuma Canyon Creek exists north of the proposed project area. An existing footpath is routed through and adjacent to the restoration area. Project plans include extending the footpath around the perimeter of the restoration area, connecting it to the beach.

The shuttle bus site is located within a highly disturbed area characterized by ruderal and landscape vegetation. Remnant coastal dune scrub habitat exists in the northern portion of the project area, the majority of which is located within the restoration area.

It is recommended that the rope fence that demarcates the boundaries of the restoration area be moved southward to incorporate the adjacent California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) and beach bur (*Ambrosia chamissonis*) plants growing on dune hummocks. This would increase the area set aside for protection and allow for the footpath to be routed on previously disturbed soil. Additionally, as a part of potential mitigation techniques, exotic plant removal may be beneficial. For example, the stand of ice plant (*Carpobrotus* sp.) located on the ocean-side of the restroom facility may be removed and the area replanted with native species. Given these recommendations, construction of the site is not likely to adversely affect any sensitive plant or wildlife species.